

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 05856 141401Z  
ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-14  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-08 NRC-07 SOE-02 DODE-00  
DOE-15 SS-15 SP-02 CEQ-01 AID-05 DOEE-00 SSO-00  
ICA-20 PA-02 JUSE-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 PM-05 /145 W  
-----012715 141411Z /47

P R 141148Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
O RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 921  
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY  
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA  
AMCONSUL MADRAS

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 5856

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: TECH, IN, US  
SUBJECT: INDO-US NUCLEAR RELATIONS

1. THE "HINDUSTAN TIMES" CARRIES AN ARTICLE APRIL 14 BY ITS WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT, N.C. MENON, PORTRAYING THE NRC'S "DELIBERATE DILATORINESS" IN APPROVING THE TARAPUR FUEL SHIPMENT AS "A FINE EXAMPLE OF GOOD, OLD-FASHIONED BUREAUCRATIC FOOT-DRAGGING" IN THE INTERESTS OF US NON-PROLIFERATION GOALS. MENON SUSPECTS THAT PRIME MINISTER DESAI'S "HEARTENINGLY TOUGH" STAND ON SAFEGUARDS HAS BLUNTED THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S INITIAL ENTHUSIASM TO PLEAD INDIA'S CASE BEFORE THE NRC TO THE POINT WHERE "FOOT -DRAGGING BY THE NRC HAS, OR IS EVEN DUE TO, THE COVERT BLESSINGS OF THE ADMINISTRATION." HE COMMENTS THAT RELEASING THE TARAPUR SHIPMENT A WEEK OR TWO BEFORE DESAI'S VISIT TO THE US WOULD BE "A GESTURE TYPICAL OF THE AMERICAN STYLE IN SUCH INSTANCES."

2. KMMENON OFFERS TWO POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS FOR THIS "TURNAROUND" IN US BEHAVIOR. (A) THE US MAY BELIEVE  
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THAT BY HOLDING UP THE TARAPUR SHIPMENT, IT IS DEMONSTRATING TO INDIA THAT "TEMPTATIONS TOWARDS PROLIFERATION ARE COUNTERBALANCED BY THE COST OF DISRUPTING EXPENSIVE NUCLEAR ELECTRIC-GENERATING SYSTEMS." (THIS CITATION IS CORRECTLY ATTRIBUTED TO JOSEPH NYE'S ARTICLE IN "FOREIGN AFFAIRS" ON LONG-TERM NON-PROLIFERATION STRATEGY.) (B) ALTERNATIVELY,

MENON SUGGESTS THAT THE ADMINISTRATION MAY ALREADY HAVE DECIDED THAT A RUPTURE IN INDO-US NUCLEAR RELATIONS IS INEVITABLE, IN WHICH CASE INDIA WILL EVENTUALLY BEGIN REPROCESSING ITS SPENT FUEL TO EXTRACT PLUTONIUM. IF THIS IS THE CASE, WHY GIVE INDIA MORE ENRICHED URANIUM NOW?

3. MENON HOPES DESAI "WOULD NOT ALLOW EUPHORIA OVER A JUST-RELEASED EXPORT LICENSE TO PUSH MORE BASIC PROBLEMS INTO THE BACKGROUND," BECAUSE "IT WOULD BE FOOLISH FOR INDIAN LEADERS TO ASSUME THAT IF INDIA AGREES TO FULL-SCOPE SAFEGUARDS--- OR EVEN SIGNS THE NPT-- THE UNITED STATES WILL GIVE THE GO-AHEAD FOR REPROCESSING OR THE FAST-BREEDER." HE URGES THAT THESE CONTENTIONS NUCLEAR ISSUES BE SETTLED NOW, AND WARNS THAT "RAISING FALSE HOPES DURING THE DESAI VISIT AND STRINGING EVERYONE ALONG TILL THEN WILL ONLY MAKE THE SUBSEQUENT AND INEVITABLE LETDOWN THAT MUCH MORE PAINFUL AND DO IRREPARABLE DAMAGE TO INDO-US RELATIONS." AND THIS, HE CONCLUDES, "WOULD BE A THOUSAND PITIES." GOHEEN

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, NUCLEAR FUELS  
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